



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

2. — *De la Morale avant les Philosophes.* Par LOUIS MÉNARD, Docteur ès Lettres. Paris: Firmin Didot Frères. 1860. 8vo. pp. 290.

LOUIS MÉNARD is a new, and, we should judge from the somewhat pedantic style of his essay, a young writer. His name does not appear in Vapereau's Dictionary, nor have we met with it in the list of any French publisher. His dedication — "*À ma Mère*" — rather indicates that this is his first attempt at authorship, and the tone is that of a college performance, rather than of a mature work. It is, we may add, a very promising beginning, showing careful and conscientious study, critical skill, and a fine enthusiasm, which may hereafter lead to valuable discoveries in the field of Greek scholarship. After a concise Introduction, in which the nature of the work, as drawing moral ideas from religious traditions, heroic legends, and systems of law previous to all direct philosophical teaching, is explained, M. Ménard proceeds, in nine chapters, to analyze the Greek poetry, mythology, and systems of government in regard to their moral teaching. He first discusses the early religious notions of the Greeks; the reasons why they gave human attributes to their gods; the general character of their polytheism, their demigods, and their heroes; their notion of immortality; and the religious sanction of their moral law. From this he passes to a consideration of the relations of men to the gods, the conflict with the Titans and Giants, the question of "Destiny," and the moral meaning of worship, oracles, and sacrifices. Then he gives a discussion of the industrial art of the early Greeks, as illustrating their morality. In the fourth and fifth chapters we have an exhibition of the ethics of domestic life, of family love, of the camp and the court, of the relation of the young to the old, and of the institution of slavery, — as all these appear in the poems of Homer. In the sixth chapter, the poems of Hesiod and the myth of Pandora are carefully examined. In the seventh chapter, the laws of Lycurgus and the verse of Tyrtæus are compared, to set forth the Spartan aristocratic communism. In the eighth, the melancholy song of Theognis is used to show the political morality of the Greek cities. And in the closing chapters, Solon, as poet and legislator, is made to speak for Athens and her democracy.

In this work there is not much that is new, or that has been overlooked in previous discussions. But the author brings forward his points so clearly and illustrates them so well, that ideas quite common in the erudite criticisms of German classical scholars have all the freshness of novelty. He stoutly maintains that the speculations of the Greek philosophers did not by any means originate the notion of the

immortality of the soul; but that this was a traditional belief of the Greek people, "one of the favorite themes of their old epic poetry, and the source of the worship of heroes and ancestors." He affirms that the philosophic speculations on this subject were only the reflections of maturity upon the ideas of its childhood,—only "the examination of the conscience of the Past." He finds descriptions of the "life to come" and the "invisible world" in the eleventh and twenty-fourth books of the *Odyssey*, in the poems of Prodicus of Phocæa, and in the "Works and Days" of Hesiod; and he insists that no error can be greater than the error which denies to this noblest branch of the Aryan race, so quick in its sentiment of human dignity, a share in the thought of a spiritual life as higher than the natural.

M. Ménard's theory is, that the philosophers did more to degrade than to exalt morality, in their speculations. He adduces Plato's theories upon love and upon family life in proof of this position. "When philosophy," he says, "had made of matter, of the feminine and passive element, the principle of evil in Nature, woman, degraded from the rank to which the popular religion and the primitive morality had assigned her, became an inferior being and the principle of evil in society." He vindicates the Helen of Homer as far superior to the abstract woman of the ethical writers, and finds the views of Hesiod, concerning marriage and the relation of the sexes, to be greatly in advance of those which obtained in the philosophic ages. He ventures even to question the popular opinion concerning the death of Socrates, and suggests that this crime, not less than the banishment of Aristides, was the natural manifestation of an honorable and watchful patriotism. "Philosophy," he says, "expiated in the person of Socrates its alliance with the enemies of order and of democracy."

The style of M. Ménard is pure, flowing, polished, and it often rises into eloquence. We hope soon to welcome some larger work from his pen.

-
3. — *Researches into the Religions of Syria; or Sketches, Historical and Doctrinal, of its Religious Sects. Drawn from Original Sources.* By the Rev. JOHN WORTABET, M. D., Missionary of the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland to Aleppo in Syria. London: James Nisbet & Co. 1860. Post 8vo. pp. 432.

MR. WORTABET had peculiar advantages in preparing a work on the Religions of Syria. He is a native of the land, has known its dialect from childhood, has belonged to more than one of the sects, and as a physician and missionary has been brought into personal relations with